if, in some such way, the elements of vocational education could be co-ordinated with manual training and they would await the results of the new experiment with great interest.

**53.** A set of rules has been sanctioned with a view to create a net-work of night schools for the benefit of illiterate adults. These are in addition to the part-time schools referred to in my Address last year, which have been sanctioned with a view to serve the children of the labouring classes.

**54. Encouragement of Vernaculars.** With a view to the further encouragement of vernacular languages, Government have ruled that all correspondence in subordinate offices should be in the vernacular as far as possible, and that every person appointed in the subordinate ranks of the service should possess a knowledge of the vernacular. A full-time Assistant Translator has been appointed in the Huzur Office mainly to cope with the work of Tamil translation. Arrangements have been made for the translation of the proceedings of the Legislative Council into Malayalam and for the speedy collection of rare Malayalam manuscripts with a view to their ultimate publication. The Vernacular Text Book Committee is being entrusted with the duty of re-editing Malayalam Readers on behalf of the Government.

**55. Libraries.** The maximum grant awardable to a village library and reading room has been raised from Rs. 100 to Rs. 150 per annum. The scheme for the affiliation of mofussil libraries to the Trivandrum Public Library, referred to in my Address last year, has been given effect to in the beginning of the current year, but only four such libraries have so far come forward to avail themselves of the concession.

**56. Depressed Classes.** The moral and material elevation of the depressed classes continues to engage the earnest attention of the Government. I have already referred to the efforts made in the direction of providing them with house-sites and economic farms, but these efforts, as already stated, have not been productive of much result, and in the opinion of the Government the time has now arrived for making the welfare of these classes the definite duty of a responsible officer. The details of this duty do not lend themselves to precise definition at once; but in the matter of securing grants of lands, they may be roughly described as consisting in the verification of lists of lands ear-marked for assignment to the depressed classes and the rectification of such lists by the elimination therefrom of useless lands and the addition thereto of useful ones, the maintenance of a record of applications for lands from members of these classes, and the watching of their disposal with a view to secure both celerity and satisfaction. The officer whose duties bring him into most intimate contact with the depressed classes is the Registrar of Co-operative Societies and the question of appointing that officer as the protector of the depressed classes is now under the consideration of Government. Most of the departmental schools hitherto inaccessible to these classes have been thrown open to them under a scheme of joint inspection by the officers of the Land Revenue and Education Departments; and there are at present only 11 departmental schools in respect of which the question does not admit of immediate solution, while, in the case of the remaining 13, the necessary steps are in progress. In the case of the former 11 also, some way must be found out of the difficulty, and this will engage the attention of the Government. Government are glad to note that there is a progressive awakening of civic consciousness among the depressed classes and that they are banding themselves together in various ways for their self-advancement. The Co-operative and Fisheries Departments have been taking pointed interest in the uplift of these communities. Up to the end of Vrischikam 1099, as many as 96 Co-operative Societies have been registered for their special benefit, while the educational and industrial help rendered by the Department of Fisheries among the fisherfolk has not been inconsiderable.

### Miscellaneous.

**57. Devaswoms.** The stabilisation of the Devaswom Department, newly constituted at the beginning of 1098, is proceeding satisfactorily. Government have ordered that the *pathivu* allotments not only for *nityanidanam*, but also for the *akattêpadittaram* in respect of *mâsavisêsham*, *âttavisêsham* and *utsavam* in all the major Devaswoms, the *pathivus* for which have been revised, should be fixed in



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kind, and that this rule should be made applicable to the other major Devaswoms also when their *pathivus* are revised. The contract system of supplies is gradually replacing the old objectionable method of purchases in the market by the subordinates of these Devaswoms. The policy of associating local gentlemen of light and leading with the management of minor and petty Devaswoms and the restoration of minor Devaswoms, announced in my Address last year, is being vigorously pursued, 17 institutions having so far been transferred to private management and 13 having been arranged to be restored at the joint cost of the Government and the people interested. A special officer has been appointed to overhaul the affairs of one more personal deposit Devaswom.

**58. Efficiency.** An audit and appropriation report was issued by the Account Officer in 1097 on the accounts of 1096, instead of the usual annual memorandum and review of objections. A further improvement was introduced in regard to the accounts of 1097 by the issue of separate reports on their audit and appropriation and it is proposed to continue the same system for the future. With a view to the reduction of account work in central offices, certain officers of the intermediary grade have been authorised to draw fully vouched contingent bills and to countersign detailed contingent and travelling allowance bills received from officers subordinate to them. Revised instructions have been issued regarding the operations of the Outside Audit branch of the Account Office, under which the detailed periodical examination of the accounts, registers and records of the several departmental offices is provided for, the results of the inspections being set forth in two documents termed the inspection report and the audit note, the former dealing with the more important defects of procedure and the latter with the errors and irregularities that may be directly disposed of by the head of the office himself. The leave rules in the Service Regulations have been amended so as to provide for the accumulation of privilege leave up to four months in the case of officers in the superior service. Provision has also been made for the grant of furlough leave on full average salary for a period not exceeding six months in lieu of furlough on half average salary for double that period, to officers the pay or maximum pay of whose appointment is not less than Rs. 200. The rules regarding the compulsory retirement of officers have been altered, it being declared that, while ministerial officers may ordinarily be retained in service up to the age of 60, provided they are efficient, other officers should be required to retire at the the age of 55, unless their retention is deemed necessary on unquestionable public grounds and they continue to be physically fit. The questions relating to a general revision of the travelling allowance rules and the devolution of powers on heads of departments are engaging the attenion of Government. A number of departmental examinations such as the Revenue Test, the Account Test, the Excise Test, the Registration Test and the Anchal Test have been introduced with a view to the improvement of efficiency in the work of these departments. The provisions of the study leave rules introduced for the first time in 1096 are being largely availed of. The preparation of departmental manuals is progressing and a *Devaswom Handbook* was issued in 1098. The issue of the *Land Revenue Manual* and a Malayalam translation thereof in a handy and up-to-date form is a pressing necessity and the question is engaging the attention of Government. The system of direct distribution of stationery from the Government Stores to the several departments has been instrumental in securing expedition of supply and avoidance of waste. Much saving has been effected in the purchase, supply and consumption of stationery of all kinds with the result that, at the beginning of 1099, it was possible to pay off all arrears due to Messrs. John Dickinson and Co., and it was thought sufficient to provide a sum of Rs. 1·74 lakhs under the head of stationery in the current year's budget, against an expenditure of Rs. 5·84 lakhs in 1097 and Rs. 4·39 lakhs in 1098. Some progress has also been made in the standardisation of printed forms in use by the several departments and some reduction has been effected in their number by the introduction of common forms. Several offices have been inspected by the Superintendent of Stationery and waste of stationery and printed forms detected and remedies suggested. Several economies have been introduced into the Government Press as preliminary to the further economies to be effected after an examination of the comprehensive report on the working of this institution

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